



Transportation Technology Transfer: A Primer on the State of the Practice

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Subscriber category
IA planning and administration

Transportation Research Board
National Research Council
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20418

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FOREWORD

This Transportation Research Circular is a primer on technology transfer (T²) within the transportation enterprise. It was developed for the Committee on Technology Transfer (A5012) of the Transportation Research Board. It is intended for use by state and local transportation agency personnel and T² providers to understand the totality of the T² process. This initial work is proposed as the forerunner of a more comprehensive T² manual.

Administrators, engineers, and researchers are continually faced with transportation problems on which much information exists, either in the form of reports or in terms of undocumented experience and practice. Unfortunately, this information is often scattered and unevaluated; as a consequence, full information on what has been learned about a problem is frequently not assembled. Costly research findings may go unused, valuable experience may be overlooked, and full consideration may not be given to available practices for solving or alleviating the problem.

Technology transfer is an integral part of the research and engineering functions. This report of the Transportation Research Board describes the technology transfer process as it is carried out by various technology transfer agencies, particularly in the United States.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special appreciation is expressed to Dr. Charles E. Wallace, Courage & Wallace, Gainesville, Florida; Dr. John A. Anderson, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and Dr. Eugene M. Wilson, Laramie, Wyoming, who were responsible for the preparation of the report and to the panel that reviewed the circular during development: Dr. Lynne H. Irwin (Cornell University), who was the chair; Ms. Carolyn D. Goodman (Virginia T² Center), and Dr. Ossama Abd Elrahman (New York State Department of Transportation).

Some of the materials in this report were initially contained in two reports on transportation technology transfer. One, called "Technology Transfer Primer," is a document prepared for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Department of Transportation by the University of Wisconsin. Clearly, this report was a forerunner of the current document, although it was more of a "how-to" primer released to the FHWA Local Transportation Assistance Program (LTAP). The second report, entitled "Transportation Technology Transfer: A Global Enterprise," was originally prepared for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and FHWA. The report was developed by one of the authors of this circular.

The preparation of this circular relied heavily on the works of others cited. It did not, however, involve an exhaustive literature review or survey of the practice, thus it relies also on the direct experience of the authors.

This circular was prepared under a contract from the Transportation Research Board and was funded by the FHWA. The authors appreciate the support of these organizations.

Information on current practice was provided by many highway and transportation agencies, technology transfer centers, and other T² providers. These are appreciated as well.

This primer was prepared under the direction of Robert E. Spicher, Director of the Technical Activities Division. It was prepared for publication by James P. Douglas, Project Assistant, and was edited by Julie Zignego and David Stearman, under the supervision of Nancy Ackerman, Director of Reports and Editorial Services for TRB.

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